

REMARKS

The application is amended and is believed to place the application in condition for allowance at the time of the next Official Action.

A replacement drawing is submitted for Figure 1 changing reference character 22 to reference character 25. Such amendment is believed to address the drawing objection noted in Item 3 of the Official Action and is not believed to be new matter.

The specification has been amended to include reference numerals 13 and 16 and is believed to address the drawing objection noted in Item 4 of the Official Action.

Page 12, lines 15-17 of the present application disclose a probe camera 12 which picks up the images of probe needles is mounted on Y stage 4. Page 18, lines 19-25 disclose that adjustment is made by measuring the height of all the pins of the probes by a laser displacement meter attached to the XY stage and using such measurement to compute parallelism. Alternatively, the inclination can be computed from the image provided by a probe-needle identifying camera (probe camera 12). Based on such a disclosure, one of ordinary skill in the art would understand that probe camera 12 is a sensor to measure the heights of the probe needles.

Claim 7 as originally presented provides that the camera as image processing means picks up images of the

inspection target. Accordingly, one of ordinary skill in the art would understand that the camera has image processing capabilities. Cameras 10 and 12 are both shown in Figure 1.

A replacement drawing figure is submitted for Figure 1 showing a control section 25. Since the control section was originally claimed in claim 1, the addition of the control section to Figure 1 is not believed to present new matter.

A drawing objection is also set forth alleging that claim 12 does not show "detecting a point at which electrical contact between the probe needles and the inspection target disappears". As claim 12 is a method claim, such requirement appears to be directed to an element that performs the detecting function. Such element is camera 20 as disclosed on page 17, lines 9-20 of the application as filed. The above-noted drawing corrections and comments are believed to address Item 5 noted in the Official Action and thus each of the drawing objections are believed addressed. No new matter is added.

The specification has been amended to make editorial changes including those noted in the Official Action to place the application in condition for allowance at the time of the next Official Action.

Specifically, the subject matter recited in the original claims is added to the specification to address the objection noted in Item 8 of the Official Action. No new matter is added by this amendment.

Claims 1-13 were previously pending in the application. Claims 2 and 12 are canceled and new claim 14 is added. Therefore, claims 1, 3-11, 13 and 14 are presented for consideration.

Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for indicating allowable subject matter in claims 3, 4, 6, 8, 12 and 13. In reliance thereon, claim 1 is amended to include the subject matter of claim 3 and claim 10 is amended to include the subject matter of claim 12.

Claims 10 and 13 are amended to address the claim objections noted in Item 10 of the Official Action.

Claims 1, 2, 5, 7 and 9-11 are rejected as anticipated by FUJIHARA et al. 5,410,259. Amending claim 1 to include the subject matter of claim 3 and amending claim 10 to include the subject matter of claim 12 is believed to render moot the rejection over FUJIHARA et al.

Since FUJIHARA et al. was the only reference applied against the claims, and since the rejection over FUJIHARA et al. is believed moot by the present amendment, the claims are believed in condition for allowance.

New claim 14 provides that an elevation unit has a movable frame and a load sensor which detect the load applied by a contact bar fixed in a movable frame as the contact bar abuts the load sensor when the movable frame moves. This feature is

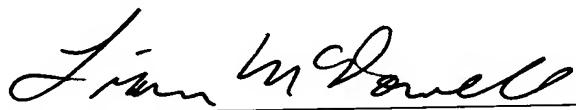
not disclosed or suggested by FUJIHARA et al. and thus claim 14 is also believed patentable over the cited prior art.

In view of the present amendment and the foregoing Remarks, it is believed that the present application has been placed in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

YOUNG & THOMPSON



Liam McDowell, Reg. No. 44,231
745 South 23rd Street
Arlington, VA 22202
Telephone (703) 521-2297
Telefax (703) 685-0573
(703) 979-4709

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APPENDIX:

The Appendix includes the following item(s) :

- a terminal disclaimer
- a 37 CFR 1.132 Declaration
- a new or amended Abstract of the Disclosure
- a Replacement Sheet for Figure 1 of the drawings
- a Substitute Specification and a marked-up copy of the originally-filed specification
- a verified English translation of foreign priority document